

INTRODUCTION

Six Ways to Classify Buddha's Teachings

The Sakya master Buton (*Buton Rinchen Drub*) explained that there are six specific ways of classifying Buddha's scriptural teachings:

- From the point of view of the three higher trainings, there are the **Three Baskets^A** (Skt. *Tripitaka*),
- From the disciple's point of view, there are the **Three Vehicles^B** (the *Three Yanas*),
- From the textual point of view, there are the **Twelve Scriptural Categories^C**,
- From the temporal point of view, there are the **Three Wheels of Dharma^D** (three rounds of transmission of the Dharma),
- From the point of view of subject matter, there are teachings that are **interpretable** and **definitive**.
- From the point of view of the circumstances of the teachings, there are:
 - Enlightening Words Spoken from Buddha's own lips,
 - Permitted Words, and
 - Enlightening Words Spoken through Buddha's Inspiration.

A. THREE BASKETS (*Tripitika*):

Basket of	Chiefly Expounds Training of:
Discipline (<i>Vinaya Pitika</i>)	Morality
Sutra (<i>Sutra Pitika</i>)	meditative stabilisation
Manifest Knowledge (<i>Abidharma Pitika</i>)	Wisdom

B. THE THREE VEHICLES – 2 Classifications

Hearer (<i>Shravaka</i>) Vehicle	Fundamental Vehicle (<i>Hinayana</i>)
Solitary Realizer (<i>Pratyekabuddha</i>) Vehicle	Universal Vehicle (<i>Mahayana</i>)
Bodhisattva Vehicle	Secret Mantra Vehicle (<i>Vajrayana</i>)

C. THE TWELVE SCRIPTURAL CATEGORIES:

1	EXPOSITIONS ON THEMES OF PRACTICE (Skt. <i>sutra</i>)	present Buddha's explanations in a brief and condensed format.
2	MELODIC VERSES (Skt. <i>geya</i>)	uttered by Buddha during course, and at conclusion, of sutras.
3	REVELATORY ACCOUNTS (Skt. <i>vyakarana</i>)	Buddha's revelations of what happened in the past or prophecies of what will occur in the future. e.g., <i>The Sutra of the White Lotus of the True Dharma</i> (Skt. <i>Saddharma Pundarika Sutra</i> ; <i>The Lotus Sutra</i>).
4	METERED VERSES (Skt. <i>gatha</i>)	two-to-six-line verses composed by Buddha.
5	SPECIAL VERSES (Skt. <i>udana</i>)	praises that Buddha uttered with joy for the sake of the long life of his teachings; not directly for the sake of specific individuals.
6	ETHICAL NARRATIVES (Skt. <i>nidana</i>)	rules, codified by Buddha, for the ordained concerning actions that constitute breaches of their vows.
7	ILLUSTRATIVE ACCOUNTS (Skt. <i>avadana</i>)	Buddha's teaching with illustrations to ease listener comprehension.
8	ANCIENT NARRATIVES stories from ancient times.	stories from ancient times.
9	PAST LIFE ACCOUNTS (Skt. <i>jataka</i>)	recount difficult ascetic practices Buddha performed in previous lives engaged in the conduct of a Bodhisattva. e.g., <i>The Sutra about the Arya Bodhisattva Arthasiddhi</i> (Skt. <i>Aryajinaputra Arthasiddhi Sutra</i>).
10	EPIC PRESENTATIONS (Skt. <i>vaipulya</i>)	expound aspects of topics, e.g., the Six Perfections & Ten Bodhisattva Grounds (Ten <i>bhumis</i>) of <i>The Basket of the Mahayana or Bodhisattva Sutras</i> .
11	FABULOUS ACCOUNTS (<i>rmad-du byung-ba</i> , <i>adbhutadharma</i>)	describe marvels, wondrous things, e.g., the wisdom, extra-sensory powers and saintly deeds of Buddhas, Pratyekabuddhas (Solitary-Realizers), and Shravakas (Hearers).
12	DECISIVE EXPLICATIONS (Skt. <i>upadesha</i>)	precisely indicate meaning of works in the <i>Basket of Sutras</i> by specifying individual and general definitions of things.

A related classification, the *NINE SCRIPTURAL CATEGORIES* differs from the Twelve by consolidating, Nos. 6-9 (ETHICAL NARRATIVES, ILLUSTRATIVE ACCOUNTS, ANCIENT NARRATIVES & PAST LIFE ACCOUNTS) into one category.

D. THE THREE WHEELS

FIRST WHEEL — Hinayana teachings given in the vicinity of Sarnath/Varanasi just after Buddha Shakyamuni's enlightenment, including the *The Wheel of Dharma Sutra*, in which Buddha taught the Four Noble Truths to his five original disciples.

SECOND WHEEL — Mahayana teachings given at the vicinity of Rajghir, including the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutras*.

THIRD WHEEL — Mahayana teachings given in the vicinity of Vaishali and Shravasti towards the end of Buddha's life, including the *Sutra Unraveling the Thought*.

**Transmission of the Two Lineages — Method and Wisdom —
passed down separately by Shakyamuni Buddha & combined in Atisha**

Shakyamuni Buddha	
the METHOD LINEAGE / Extensive Behavioral Lineage	the WISDOM LINEAGE / Subtle View Lineage
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maitreya 2. Asanga 3. Vasubhandu 4. Arya Vimuktisena 5. Venerable Vimuktisena 6. Paramasena 7. Vinitasena 8. Vairochana 9. Haribhadra 10. Kusali 11. Ratnasena 12. Suvarnadvipa [Serlingpa - teacher of Atisha] 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Manjushri 2. Nagarjuna 3. Chandrakirti 4. Vidhyakokila the Elder 5. Vidhyakokila the Younger [teacher of Atisha]
Atisha	

Course Texts – course interweaves explanations from the following texts:

- Maitreya's *Ornament for Clear Realization*
- Haribhadra's *Commentary: Clear Meaning*
- Gyeltsab Je's *Explanation: Ornament of the Essence*
- Je Tsong Khapa's *The Golden Rosary of Eloquent Teachings*
- Panchen Sonam Drakpa's *General Meaning*
- Panchen Sonam Drakpa's *Decisive Analysis*

Of these, the main texts are: the *Ornament for Clear Realization*, the *Clear Meaning*, and the *Ornament of the Essence*.

The *Ornament for Clear Realization* is an Indian commentary on the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutras*, the *Clear Meaning* is an Indian commentary on the *Ornament for Clear Realization*, and the *Ornament of the Essence* is a Tibetan commentary on the *Clear Meaning*.

The *Ornament for Clear Realization* is a short but influential commentary which condenses the implicit meaning of the Perfection of Wisdom Sutras into *Eight Clear Realizations* and *Seventy Topics*.

The *Eight Clear Realizations* can also be divided into three:

1. Objects of Meditation (*i.e.*, the *Three Knowers*)
2. Four Meditating Minds (*i.e.*, the *Four Practices*), &
3. Result of the Meditation (*i.e.*, the *Resultant Wisdom Truth Body*).

EIGHT CLEAR REALIZATIONS

- 1 Exalted Knower of All Aspects /
Omniscient Mind

- 2 Knower of Paths

- 3 Knower of Basis
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Three Knowers
(OBJECTS OF MEDITATION)

- 4 Full Awakening to all Aspects

- 5 Culmination Clear Realization

- 6 Serial Clear Realization

- 7 Clear Realization in a Single Instant
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Four Practices
(FOUR MEDITATING MINDS)

- 8 ***Resultant Wisdom Truth Body***
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(RESULT OF THE MEDITATION)

FIVE TREATISES BY MAITREYA

1	<i>Differentiation of Phenomena and the Nature of Phenomena</i> (Skt. <i>Dharmadharmatavibhaga</i>)	expounds OTHER-POWERED PHENOMENA (as the basis of emptiness) and EMPTINESS (the lack of duality of subject and object)
2	<i>Differentiation of the Middle Way and the Extremes</i> (Skt. <i>Madhyantavibhaga</i>)	explains the common and uncommon vehicles' bases, paths, and results
3	<i>Ornament for the Mahayana Sutra</i> (Skt. <i>Mahayanasutralamkara</i>)	describes the essential points of practice extracted from numerous sutras, starting from awakening the Buddha lineage, strengthening Bodhicitta and caring for disciples.
4	<i>Ornament for Clear Realization</i> (Skt. <i>Abhisamayalamkara</i>)	is the main treatise on the graduated stages to enlightenment.
5	<i>Sublime Continuum of the Great Vehicle</i> (Skt. <i>Mahayanuttaratanttrasastra</i>)	This treatise establishes one final attainment by explaining the Natural Buddha Lineage (<i>i.e.</i> , the emptiness of the mind free from all extremes), and the final view expounded by Nagarjuna in his comments on sutra.

The first three of Maitreya's treatises are presented from the point of view the Chittamatra (Mind-Only School) and the latter two from the point of view of the Madhyamika (Middle Way School).

TRAIL-BLAZERS

(also known as: **Pioneers / Charioteers / Openers of the Chariot Way – those who clear off paths that have become overgrown**)

Definition of a Trail-Blazer:

A human Arya Bodhisattva who was prophesized by the Buddha and who, independent of the commentary of another human being, differentiates well between the interpretative and the definitive teachings of the Buddha.

Division of Trail-Blazers:

1. Madhyamika (Middle Way) Trail-Blazer
2. Chittamatra (Mind Only) Trail-Blazer

Nagarjuna is the Madhyamika (Middle Way) Trail-Blazer and Asanga the Chittamatra (Mind-Only) Trail-Blazer.

Madhyamika (Middle Way) Trail-Blazing system:

Expounds, through citation of texts and through reasoning, that there is not even a particle that ultimately exists, yet conventionally actions and their agents are feasible.

By relying on the *Teaching on the Akshyamati Sutra* and the *King of Meditative Stabilization Sutra*, Nagarjuna delineated the teachings of Buddha by determining which teachings are interpretative and which are definitive. In this way he also elucidated the Middle Way philosophical tenets.

Nagarjuna's Trail-Blazer treatises:

1. **SIX COLLECTIONS OF REASONING** (treatises that differentiate by way of reasoning)
2. **Compendium of Sutra** (a treatise that differentiates by way of quotations)

SIX COLLECTIONS OF REASONING

1	<i>The Fundamental Wisdom</i>	establishes subtle emptiness through reasoning; mainly refutes an inherently existing object that is to be proven.
2	<i>Treatise Called the 'The Finely Woven'</i>	refutes the Sixteen Categories of Proof of Philosophers.
3	<i>Seventy Stanzas on Emptiness</i>	shows that an action and its agent are feasible even though they are empty of inherent existence.
4	<i>Refutation of Objections</i>	particularly shows that the action and agent of proof and refutations are feasible.
Thus, the foregoing four treatises establish the subtle objective emptiness.		
5	<i>Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning</i>	shows that a viewing consciousness that realizes the subtle objective emptiness is the fundamental path to liberation.
6	<i>The Precious Garland</i>	shows the fundamental path to omniscience.

Thus, the latter two treatises show that the viewing consciousness that realizes the subtle subjective emptiness is the fundamental path to liberation and omniscience

Nagarjuna in Prophecy

In the *Superior Sutra on the Descent into Lanka*, Manjushri asks the Buddha who will uphold the vehicle pacifying the elaborations of terms and conceptuality (the object of the exalted wisdom of individual knowledge in meditative equipoise):

The vehicle of individual knowledge
Is not in the sphere of [false] logicians.
Please tell who will uphold it
After the Protector has passed away.

In answer, Buddha says that Naga(rjuna) will comment on the definitive vehicle, devoid of the extremes of inherent existence and conventional non-existence:

Mahamati, know that after
The One Gone to Bliss has passed away
There will appear after the passage of time
One who will uphold the ways [of emptiness, the essence of the teachings].
In the south, in the area of Vidarba
Will be a monk known widely as Shriman
Who will also be called Naga.
Destroying the [extreme] position of [inherent] existence and [conventional] non-
Existence,
He will thoroughly teach in the world
The unsurpassed Great Vehicle – my vehicle.
Having done this, he will achieve the Very Joyful ground
And then go to the Blissful [Pure Land upon passing away].

Another prophecy is from the *Great Cloud Superior Sutra of Twelve Thousand Stanzas*:

Ananda, four hundred years after I [Shakyamuni Buddha] pass away,
this Licchavi youth, Liked-When-Seen-by-All-the-World, will become a monk known
as Naga and will disseminate my teaching.
Finally, in the land known as Very Pure Light he will become
a One Gone Thus, a Foe Destroyer, a completely perfect Buddha
named Light-Which-Is-a-Source-of-All-Wisdom.

Another prophecy is from the *Manjushri Root Tantra*:

When four hundred years have passed
After I, the One Gone Thus, have passed away,
A monk called Naga will arise.
Faithful in and helpful to the teaching,
He will attain the Very Joyful ground.
Living for six hundred years,
That great being will also achieve
The knowledge [-mantra] of Mahamayuri.
He will know the meaning of various treatises
And the meaning of no inherent existence.
When he leaves that body,
He will be born in the [Pure Land of] Bliss.
Finally he will just definitely attain
Thoroughly the state of Buddhahood.

Chittamatrin (Mind-Only) Trail-Blazing system:

Expounds through the citation of texts and through reasoning that:

- there are No External Phenomena.
- Other-Powered and Thoroughly-Established Phenomena are truly existent.
- All-Imputed Phenomena are not truly existent.

By relying on the *Sutra Unraveling the Thought*, Asanga delineated Buddha's teachings by determining which teachings are interpretative and which are definitive. In this way he also elucidated the Mind-Only philosophical tenets.

Asanga's Trail-Blazer treatises:

1. FIVE TREATISES ON THE LEVELS
2. TWO COMPENDIA

FIVE TREATISES

1. *Actuality of the Levels* / Levels of Yogic Practice
2. *Compendium of Ascertainments*
3. *Compendium of Bases*
4. *Compendium of Enumerations*
5. *Compendium of Explanations*

The five treatises are comprised of 130 volumes

TWO COMPENDIA

1. *Compendium of Knowledge*
2. *Compendium of the Mahayana Sutras*

Asanga in Prophecy:

The *Manjushri Root Tantra*, cited in the *Great Commentary on the Sutra Unravelling the Thought*, says:

"When nine hundred years have passed
After I have gone beyond,
There will be a monk called Asanga,
Skilled in the meaning of treatises.

He will differentiate many aspects
Of definitive and interpretable meanings.
He will have the nature of explaining texts,
His selfhood being to teach worldly knowledge.

About his achievement of knowledge
Through the power of mantra
Of the one called Female Messenger of Sala
His awareness will grow good.

For the sake of the teaching remaining long
He will compile the meanings of the principles in sutras
He will live for one hundred and fifty years.
His body having disintegrated, he will go to the lands of gods.

Having experienced bliss for a long time
Traveling in cyclic existence,
This great being finally
Will attain enlightenment.